

Recovery Jobs Require Strong Community Colleges

NC Community Colleges' Budget Priorities for 2011-12

The 2011-12 fiscal year will represent the most difficult budget in our System's history and will come at a time when the demands on our 58 colleges are at a peak. Post-recovery jobs and the economic growth that goes with them demand strong community colleges to provide the workforce and educational opportunities needed for employees. The budget priorities below reflect our colleges' focus on student access and success, both of which translate into a qualified workforce for NC's businesses.

2011-12 Budget Priorities

- **Fully fund enrollment growth and the equipment needs** that accompany an increase in students. Unlike public schools and universities, community colleges are funded after the fact for growth and categorically for equipment. If we are, for the first time in our history, not fully funded for growth, it will impact our colleges' ability to serve more than 9,700 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. Colleges are currently funded to replace their equipment only once every nine years, assuming we could buy the same equipment at the original price. (Estimated funding needed: **\$34 million and \$6 million** respectively)
- **Limit cuts to our colleges.** Every one percent reduction, \$10 million, means our colleges will serve 2,800 fewer full-time equivalent students, and more than 160 faculty/staff could be cut.

Facts about NC Community Colleges

- Enrollment at our 58 community colleges is nearly **850,000**, meaning one in eight NC adults is involved in education or training at one of our community colleges.
- Over the last decade, our state budget has increased, on average, at exactly the same rate as our enrollment growth (5.1 percent). However, since the start of the recession, our full-time equivalent **enrollment has grown by 25 percent (50,000 FTE)**, making our system the state's fastest-growing educational sector, while our General Fund appropriation **per student has decreased 12 percent**.
- **Enrollment in technical education programs** – transportation, engineering, industrial and construction – has **grown by 25 percent** during the last year.
- More than **3,100 jobs were retained or created** and **740 small businesses started** because of the impact of the business counseling more than 6,400 entrepreneurs received at one of our 58 small business centers.
- More than **16,000 North Carolinians received training** through our Customized Training Program to help them prepare for a newly created job or to increase the skill set at an existing job.
- Our colleges **train two-thirds of all the nurses** educated in North Carolina and about **85 percent of all first responders** such as fire, law and emergency public servants.